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MEMORANDUM FOR: Inspector General

SUBJECT : Conditions in Payroll Branch, Fiscal Division,  
Office of the Comptroller

REFERENCES : a. Memo for DD/S from IG dtd 2 Oct 1956  
b. Memo for DD/S from Compt dtd 16 Oct 1956

1. This memorandum is for information only.
2. Subsequent to 16 October 1956, the date of reference b, additional actions and/or plans have taken place with respect to the Payroll Branch, Fiscal Division, Office of the Comptroller, which would appear to be of interest to your Office. This information as reported to us by the Comptroller is therefore passed on to you in the following paragraphs.
3. The Office of the Comptroller and the Office of Personnel concentrated on completely filling the T/O of the Payroll Branch and as a result, the T/O was completely filled by 30 November 1956. Each recruit was carefully selected by the Office of the Comptroller in order to assure that each appeared to be the type of person who would perform satisfactorily and remain indefinitely in payroll work. As of 26 February 1957 the T/O is still completely filled and since 30 November there have been no resignations. One person was reassigned since November 30 and therefore replaced, but the reassignment was for purpose of improving the employee and not because of any dissatisfaction.
4. On 26 November 1956 the Payroll Branch was moved from Alecott Hall to Wing E of Curie Hall in order that the branch would be adjacent to the Machine Records Division, Office of the Comptroller. This change in location has eliminated lost time and inconvenience caused by separation of the Payroll Branch and the Machine Records Division. Also the change in location has resulted in smoother operations and better understanding of problems and procedures between the two offices.
5. Reference a. reported that the Payroll Branch for the period July to the date of the survey had averaged overtime at the rate of 16 per cent of total working hours. For the months of October through December 1956, the rate of overtime was reduced to 3 per cent of total hours worked. As would be expected with respect to payroll activity, the percentage of overtime increased during January and the first part of February, but the average for this period was only 11 per cent which is reasonable for that particular period. The increase was due to the usual year-end problems, such as, the issuance of W-2 forms and the preparation of other year-end reports. Also contributing to this increase was extra labor required to transfer manually

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maintained leave records to a machine record system. The personnel of the Payroll Branch were very much interested in the elimination of the manual leave record and its transfer to machines, since the manual procedure represented one of the more monotonous type jobs performed by payroll clerks. As has been the practice at all times, the overtime performed was on a voluntary basis and was considered very worthwhile by the employees for the results that now are and will continue to be realized. The overtime for the branch has now decreased again and the present trend is approximately 2 to 3 per cent of the total hours worked by the branch.

6. In order to attempt to thoroughly understand the problems of the Payroll Branch employees, the Office of the Comptroller requested the Assessment and Evaluation Staff of the Office of Training to study the personnel problems in the Payroll Branch. The Assessment and Evaluation Staff, Office of Training, performed a survey and rendered a report to the Office of the Comptroller 15 January 1957. This report concludes that the existence of conflicting age groups is believed to be the most basic difficulty of the Payroll Branch. They pointed out that before further study is made, a basic decision is needed concerning the age group that the Office of the Comptroller should work toward for the Payroll Branch. The report further indicated that factors which will need to be considered with respect to the basic decision are: (1) Method of approaching the goal of a homogeneous group, (2) The kind of supervision that will be needed to implement the decision and (3) The kind of rewards this job will emphasize both monetary and psychological. The Office of the Comptroller is in the process of studying these problems and as part of the study is considering the employment of a certain individual from outside the Agency who it appears would be agreeable to making his entire career in the Payroll Branch with the expectation of eventually being the chief of the branch. It is believed that having a chief who would be satisfied with such a position for the remainder of his career in the Agency and in the Government would be of considerable benefit. The individual under consideration has been subjected to appropriate tests by the Assessment and Evaluation Staff of the Office of Training and they have concluded that the individual has the ability to perform in the position as chief of the Payroll Branch and apparently would be satisfied to remain in such position for the rest of his Government career. The Office of the Comptroller is pursuing this further and will make a decision with respect thereto in the very near future. Also further determinations will be made by the Comptroller concerning other approaches to attaining a homogeneous group.

7. The Office of the Comptroller also in conjunction with the Management Staff has investigated the practicability and appropriateness of installing a system for playing music in the Payroll Branch. The playing of music during working hours in offices where work is inclined to be repetitious and monotonous has been very beneficial to certain other Government offices and in industry. It appears that perhaps a music system would also be beneficial in the Payroll Branch for the same reasons, but it must be financed by the personnel of the branch, since Government funds cannot be used for such purpose. The employees of the Payroll Branch unanimously desire that such a system be installed and are willing to pay for its installation and upkeep if arrangements can be made on a reasonable cost basis. A committee of Payroll Branch

employees has therefore been appointed to thoroughly investigate the possibilities and to present their conclusions and proposal to the employees of the Payroll Branch and the Comptroller for decision.

8. The morale of the Payroll Branch has been vastly improved and the office of the Comptroller will continue to work toward further improvements in the morale and working conditions of that office.

(signed) H. Gates Lloyd

H. GATES LLOYD  
Assistant Deputy Director (Support)

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